

FROM THE BOOKSHELF NO. 127
SEAN KELLY

FEBRUARY 10, 1976

THE PROMISE OF JOY BY ALLEN DRURY
(VOICED PIECE IN TAPE LIBRARY)

ANNCR: THE VOICE OF AMERICA BRINGS YOU ANOTHER IN THE WEEKLY SERIES ... FROM THE BOOKSHELF ... REPORTS ON BOOKS AMERICANS ARE READING. TODAY, SEAN KELLY'S REPORT ON ALLEN DRURY'S NOVEL, "THE PROMISE OF JOY," PUBLISHED BY DOUBLEDAY. HERE IS BOOK EDITOR _____.

EDITOR: ALLEN DRURY'S LATEST NOVEL ... THE PROMISE OF JOY ... MARKS THE END OF A POLITICAL SAGA THAT BEGAN MORE THAN FIFTEEN YEARS AGO -- WITH THE PUBLICATION OF ADVISE AND CONSENT. NOW, THREE THOUSAND PAGES, FIFTY MAJOR CHARACTERS, AND FIVE BOOKS LATER, THE SERIES CONCLUDES WITH THE PROMISE OF JOY.

IN THE YEARS BETWEEN, BOTH THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCENE -- AND THE PACE AND SUBSTANCE OF ALLEN DRURY'S NOVELS -- HAVE UNDERGONE A CONSIDERABLE TRANSFORMATION. ADVISE AND CONSENT WHICH WAS WRITTEN IN 1958, DID NOT ANTICIPATE THE ASSASSINATION OF AN AMERICAN PRESIDENT, NOR DID IT FORESEE WIDESPREAD CIVIL RIGHTS DEMONSTRATIONS, A LINGERING U.S. MILITARY INVOLVEMENT IN INDOCHINA, OR THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SCANDALS THAT WOULD LEAD TO THE RESIGNATION FROM OFFICE OF BOTH A PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT.

THE PROMISE OF JOY -- ON THE OTHER HAND -- NOT ONLY DEALS WITH ABRUPT POLITICAL CHANGE. IT ALSO MOVES SWIFTLY FROM ASSASSINATION TO TERRORIST KIDNAPPINGS

EDITOR:
(CONT'D) TO RIOTING IN THE STREETS TO ULTIMATE VIOLENCE: THE
OUTBREAK OF NUCLEAR WAR BETWEEN CHINA AND THE SOVIET
UNION.

IF THIS STRIKES SOME OF DRURY'S READERS AS BEING A BIT
OVER-DRAWN, IT DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE DIMINISHED THE
OVERALL POPULARITY -- OR THE COMMERCIAL SUCCESS -- OF
THE SIX NOVELS IN THE ADVISE AND CONSENT SERIES.

BUT LET THE READER BEWARE: ALLEN DRURY IS WRITING
FICTION, ALTHOUGH IT IS ADMITTEDLY CAST AGAINST A
REALISTIC BACKDROP. A FORMER WASHINGTON REPORTER,
DRURY KNOWS THE CAPITAL WELL -- AND HIS NOVELS WEAVE
IN BITS OF HEADLINES, NEWS COPY, EDITORIALS AND SPEECHES
IN A JOHN DOS PASSOS-LIKE DOCUMENTARY STYLE. IT MAKES
THE FANTASY SEEM ALL THE MORE REAL.

ALLEN DRURY WOULD ARGUE THAT HE IS NOT WRITING FANTASY.
HE SEES A COMMON THREAD LINKING THE BOOKS OF THE ADVISE
AND CONSENT SERIES. IN THE PREFACE TO THE PROMISE
OF JOY, DRURY WRITES:

VOICE: "RUNNING THROUGH ALL SIX NOVELS -- AS IT RUNS THROUGH
OUR TIMES -- IS THE CONTINUING ARGUMENT BETWEEN THOSE
WHO WOULD USE RESPONSIBLE FIRMNESS TO MAINTAIN ORDERLY
SOCIAL PROGRESS AND OPPOSE COMMUNIST IMPERIALISM IN
ITS DRIVE FOR WORLD DOMINATION; AND THOSE WHO BELIEVE
THAT IN A RELUCTANCE TO BE FIRM, IN PERMISSIVENESS AND
IN THE STEADY EROSION OF LAW LIE THE SUREST PATH TO
WORLD PEACE AND A STABLE SOCIETY."

EDITOR: SOME OF DRURY'S READERS WOULD REPLY THAT SUCH AN EITHER-OR, US-VERSUS-THEM, IDEOLOGICAL OUTLOOK IS OVERLY-SIMPLISTIC -- THAT IT VIRTUALLY IGNORES THE SUBTLE GRAYS AND MUTED IMPRECISIONS OF DIPLOMATIC COMPROMISE THAT CAN -- AND INDEED HAVE -- LED TO NEGOTIATED ACCOMMODATION BETWEEN THE BITTEREST OF POLITICAL ADVERSARIES. THUS ONE REVIEWER OF THE ENTIRE ALLEN DRURY SERIES FINDS THE BOOKS "INCREASINGLY HYSTERICAL," WHILE ANOTHER CRITIC DETECTS A CLEAR ANTI-LIBERAL POLITICAL BIAS RUNNING THROUGH ALL SIX OF THE NOVELS.

ALLEN DRURY'S FICTIONAL HEROS DO TEND TO BE POLITICALLY CONSERVATIVE IN THEIR VIEWS, WHILE HIS VILLAINS ARE OFTEN LIBERAL, IF NOT OUTRIGHT PRACTICING MARXIST-LENINISTS. IRONICALLY -- FOR A FORMER NEWSMAN -- DRURY PAINTS A FREQUENTLY DISPARAGING PORTRAIT OF THE AMERICAN JOURNALISM PROFESSION. HE GIVES HIS NEWS COMMENTATORS NAMES LIKE FRANKLY UNCTUOUS. AND HE DESCRIBES THE EDITORIAL POLICIES OF MAJOR U.S. NEWSPAPERS AS BEING SO SIMILAR IN VIEWPOINT THAT THE ACTUAL TITLES OF THE JOURNALS THEMSELVES BECOME INTER-CHANGEABLE. DRURY IS GIVEN TO LUMPING THE PRESS TOGETHER IN A VAST LEFT-WING CONSPIRACY:

VOICE: "...SUPERMEDIA WEIGHED IN. THE TIMES, THE POST ... TIME, NEWSWEEK AND ALL THEIR THINK-ALIKES ACROSS THE COUNTRY JOINED IN SHARP, UNANIMOUS CRITICISM... WITHOUT QUITE INCITING TO RIOT, FRANKLY UNCTUOUS AND

VOICE:

(END OPT)HIS COLLEAGUES OF TUBE (TELEVISION) AND AIRWAVE DID THE SAME. FROM ACTIVIST PROFESSORS, CLERGYMEN, LAWYERS AND MOVIE STARS OF A CERTAIN HEADLINE-AVID TYPE CAME EQUALLY FERVENT PRONOUNCEMENTS. GIVING THEM ASSURANCE THAT THEY WERE DOING THE RIGHT THING FOR THE RIGHT CAUSE AROUND THE WORLD, MANY LEADING JOURNALS, POLITICIANS AND EXPOUNDERS-ON-AMERICAN SHORTCOMINGS JOINED THE CHORUS."

EDITOR: THE TITLE OF DRURY'S FINAL NOVEL IN THE ADVISE AND CONSENT SERIES IS DRAWN FROM AN UNATTRIBUTED QUOTATION. "LET US WEAR UPON OUR SLEEVES," HE WRITES, "THE CREPE OF MOURNING FOR A CIVILIZATION THAT HELD THE PROMISE OF JOY." HE SEES SUCH A PROMISE AS BEING "ALL THAT THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT, ALL THAT ANY EXPERIMENT IN HUMAN GOVERNANCE THAT SPRANG FROM ESSENTIALLY DECENT MOTIVES COULD HOLD OUT..."

CAN THE PROMISE OF JOY, DRURY ASKS, BE ACHIEVED?

HE HAS HIS HERO SEND MISSILES, BOMBS, PLANES AND SUBMARINES TO FIND OUT.

ANNCR: YOU HAVE BEEN LISTENING TO A REPORT ON ALLEN DRURY'S NOVEL THE PROMISE OF JOY. WE INVITE YOU TO JOIN US NEXT WEEK (AT THIS SAME TIME) WHEN THE VOICE OF AMERICA WILL BRING YOU ANOTHER REPORT ON ONE OF THE MANY BOOKS AMERICANS ARE CHOOSING FROM THE BOOKSHELF.

THIS IS _____